

Project Update: December 2017

Pathological, histo-pathological, radiological and axial computed tomography studies have been completed and analysed successfully ! We managed to analyse far more samples than originally planned in this project, which provided even better insight into the current state of populations of elasmobranchs and their health within the Neum bay, for the very first time.

According to the anonymous questionnaire (for undergraduate students), our workshops have been rated as one of the best scientific/conservation workshops on the state level for the last couple of years which are very strong and important recognition for me and the rest of the project team. It has strengthened our conviction to transfer skills and knowledge on the best possible way to younger experts and students, but wider public masses as well. Also, we have conducted far more work and educations with undergraduate students than originally planned in this project.

Finally, as the probably most important results of this project, we have developed the proposals for the law amendments in order to establish long-term in-situ conservation of species and habitats. Unfortunately, previously proposed red list have not included any marine species (!) except dolphins, we have proposed a red list of elasmobranchs which primarily or temporarily inhabits our territorial waters. In addition, I have developed a fundamental principle for further legal protection. Both papers are currently in the press at the local zoological peer-review journal.

We chose to publish in our native language(s) (Serbian/Bosnian/Croatian) in order to make our work more accessible for local community and government, as well. I have also provided a advices for the reinforcement of existing laws, according to the European Directives. We have also urged the Ministry of environment and tourism to adopt the Ordinance on the Strictry Protected and Protected species, not only marine, but entire fauna. Both federal ministry and municipalities of Neum have provided their initial support for the action plan (on the municipality level) and strategy for legal protection (on a state level). This was an extraordinary acknowledgement for all what we have done in order to conserve marine species in our country. We have several meetings planned in January and February 2018, after the completion of this project in order to mutually develop the best way to ensure that the species and habitats are truly protected, not only somewhere in the paper, which nobody will respect.

Following Papers Have Been In Press At The Moment:

Author(s)	Title	Journal	ISSN
Andrej Gajić	A fundamental principle of legal protection of the elasmobranch species in Bosnia and Herzegovina.	Supplement to fauna of Bosnia and Herzegovina	1840-0450
Andrej Gajić, Adla Kahić & Suvad Lelo	Preliminary proposal of the Red list of the elasmobranchs, <i>Classis Elasmobranchi</i> Bonaparte, 1838, in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Supplement to fauna of Bosnia and Herzegovina	1840-0450

Following Conference Lectures/Proceeding Are In Prep:

Author(s)	Presentation Title	Conference	Location
Andrej Gajić	Assessment of Degree of Exploration and Conservation Strategy of the Protection of Sharks, Skates and Rays in the Neum Bay	27th Rufford Conference: From Mountains to Deep Seas	Bar, MNE